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## FROM FIELD AND STUDY

**The Bohemian Waxwing in Colorado.**—The Bohemian Waxwing (*Bombycilla garrula*), though erratic in its movements, visits Colorado in numbers every winter; but not within the memory of the oldest settler has it heretofore appeared along the eastern foothills and the western edge of the great plains in such large flocks as in 1917. It has attracted the attention of thousands of people who never noticed the species before, and who supposed that it was something unknown.

The first word I had of the arrival of these birds in the state was from Mr. O. De Motte, who reported a flock of a thousand at Wall Street, in the mountains of Boulder County, about January 10, and smaller flocks from time to time until March 5. Telephone communications reported large flocks at Longmont on February 25, in the orchards. On March 2, during a heavy snowstorm, and for several days thereafter, my office and house telephones were kept busy by numerous reports from excited men, women and children in various parts of Boulder, telling of the thousands of queer birds gathered in the orchards, and asking what they were, whence and why they came, where and when they were going. I was especially pleased with the interest shown by the teachers in seeking accurate information concerning the birds and their habits, for the benefit of their pupils.

The birds fed upon the frozen apples, a feast prepared for them by an unexpected freeze early last autumn. I counted five hundred waxwings in one tree and estimated that there were at least 10,000 or 15,000 within a radius of half a mile from the county court house. The large flocks began to break up about March 12, perhaps because the larger food supplies were giving out; but individuals and smaller flocks were seen daily until March 28. No Cedar Waxwings were seen. Reports of waxwings in equal abundance in Denver began to appear in the Denver newspapers a few days after their appearance in Boulder. A similar visitation was reported in Grand River Valley, on the western slope, several years ago, and then, as on this occasion at Boulder and Longmont, frozen apples provided them with a banquet.—JUNIUS HENDERSON, *Boulder, Colorado, April 11, 1917.*

**Another Instance of Lead Poisoning in Ducks.**—During the winter of 1907-08, the writer learns from Mr. J. H. Bowles, of Tacoma, that Mallards (*Anas platyrhynchos*) suffered in considerable numbers from the effects of lead poisoning. So far as known this occurred only at the Nisqually Flats, located between Tacoma and Olympia, where the Nisqually River empties into Puget Sound. These flats have been shot over by duck hunters for the past forty years and have doubtless become fairly well charged with lead. So far as known only the Mallards were affected, but in this species as many as twenty-seven pellets were taken from a single stomach. No recurrence of this trouble has been reported until the present season of 1917, when on March 3, the writer collected an adult female of the Scaup Duck (*Marila marila*). This bird was found in the same vicinity as the others, and was unable to fly because of its greatly weakened condition. While skinning it no wounds were found, but an examination of the contents of the stomach revealed twelve duck shot and nothing else. In this instance, as in all the others, the walls of the stomach were eaten away, to a considerable extent, and the larger intestine had become slaty blue in color. The ducks evidently mistake the shot for sand, or gravel, and eat them with their food. It is interesting to note that this is the only local record of the kind since 1907-08, although the ground has been thoroughly worked over by careful observers.—STANTON WARBURTON, JR., *Tacoma, Washington, March 8, 1917.*

**Fork-tailed Petrel and Baird Sandpiper in Southern California.**—The following good records of birds rare in southern California have resulted from the systematic beach work being carried on by the Museum of History, Science and Art.

Fork-tailed Petrel (*Oceanodroma furcata*). A total of nine birds found dead on the beach in the vicinity of the village of Sunset Beach, Orange County, in 1916, as follows: One each on May 15 and 22, three on May 25, and four on June 1. Two of these were fresh enough to save as skins, while skeletons were made of several others. All were found in a distance of less than a mile, six within forty feet, and four in a space hardly eight feet square. In the last case the proximity of the birds suggests that they died on the beach.

Baird Sandpiper (*Pisobia bairdi*). Five seen, of which three were taken, near Del Rey, Los Angeles County, August 17, 1916. Aside from the Catalina Island record, this appears to be the only one for the coast between San Diego and Santa Barbara. If collectors generally would give the beach its share of their attention, possibly this bird, and other species as well, would prove less rare than published records indicate.—L. E. WYMAN, *Mus. Hist. Science and Art, Los Angeles*, April 8, 1917.

**Nesting of the Harris Hawk in Southeastern California.**—In the first half of March, 1917, a pair of Harris Hawks (*Parabuteo unicinctus harrisii*) were noticed almost every day, but during the last half of the month they were not around so much or not in sight so often. I had looked in all the tall trees in this vicinity but had not found a nest that looked like a hawk's nest, so thought they were nesting some place else.

On April 4 Dr. Loye H. Miller was here to visit the valley and on the 5th we two were going down the lagoon near a garden I have about a quarter of a mile from the store, when I thought of a large nest I had found in the winter in a bunch of mistletoe. This proved to belong to the Harris Hawks. On climbing up to it we found three eggs. Two of the eggs were unmarked and of a grayish color or more of a soiled white, while the other had a few pale brown splotches on the larger end. They looked like they were about to hatch when we found them.

The nest is in a thicket of mesquite with arrowweed underbrush, near a slough that has water in it most of the time. Near the nest is a large thicket of tall willows, and the slough is full of dead trees, cat-tails and tules. One of the tallest of the willows is used more or less as a look-out for the old birds. Although the nest is very close to the houses I have never seen the birds on this side of the lagoon. They do not make very much noise after the nest is established unless something is near the nest.

I visited the nest every two or three days to find out when the eggs hatched. On the morning of the 27th of April one of the birds was out and by night the other two had left their shells. They are of a light buff color.—LEO WILEY, *Palo Verde, California*, May 2, 1917.

**Notes from the Fresno District.**—To the list of 194 birds of the Fresno district published by Mr. Tyler I wish to add four names. On November 3, 1910, Mr. Joseph Sloanaker secured at Raisin, and sent to me, a Nevada Sage Sparrow (*Amphispiza nevadensis nevadensis*). This was not reported before owing to a mistake in identification.

March 18, 1916, Alaska Myrtle Warbler (*Dendroica coronata hooveri*); May 15, 1916, Calliope Hummingbird (*Stellula calliope*); October 2, 1916, Russet-backed Thrush (*Hylocichla ustulata ustulata*): these three birds were picked up dead in the city of Fresno.—WINIFRED N. WEAR, *Fresno, California*, June 10, 1917.

**Another Record of the European Widgeon from the State of Washington.**—Reports of a more or less reliable nature concerning the capture of *Mareca penelope* in this state are not infrequent, but there are so few actual specimens for comparison and study that such new ones as come to hand would seem to be worthy of recording. The most recent to my knowledge is a handsome male taken by myself on March 31, 1917, on the Nisqually Flats, Thurston County, Washington. It was in the company of about fifty Baldpates (*Mareca americana*) that were feeding on the ranch owned by Mr. William Goodburn, who very kindly gave his permission to collect on his property. No other birds of this species were seen, nor have any others been recorded from the state this season as far as known to me.—STANTON WARBURTON, JR., *Tacoma, Washington*, April 4, 1917.

**Notes on the Black-crowned Night Heron near Denver.**—While out motoring on May 13, I stopped to investigate a familiar ash "tree claim", or grove, about fifteen miles from Denver, a favorite breeding place for magpies, and was surprised to find a rookery of perhaps fifty nests of the Black-crowned Night Heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax naevius*) in all stages of construction. Noticing one of the birds leave the top of a magpie's nest I made investigation and found three of the herons' eggs on top while inside of the nest were seven fresh magpie eggs; on the ground and in some of the herons' nests was ample evidence of the magpies' depredations. From another tree not over fifty feet distant from this one I flushed a Long-eared Owl (*Asio wilsonianus*) from an

old magpie's nest, in the mud cup of which, without any apparent housecleaning or repairs (the canopy or top being gone), she had deposited five eggs. These nests were about twenty feet from the ground. —W. C. BRADBURY, *Denver, Colorado, May 17, 1917.*

**Some April Nesting Notes from the Vicinity of Buena Vista Lake, Kern County, California.**—A party composed of Mr. and Mrs. O. W. Howard, Mr. H. Sandberg and the writer spent most of April 1 and the forenoon of April 2 in the brushy country bordering Buena Vista Lake. Our time was occupied in search of nests of the various land birds of the locality, the particular objectives being the nests of Sage and Leconte thrashers. On April 1 the first find was a partially constructed nest of the Sage Thrasher (*Oreoscopus montanus*), one of the birds being shot after it left the nest. Another nest in about the same stage of construction was found a short time later. At this nest both birds were present. In this same vicinity was found a nest of the Leconte Thrasher (*Toxostoma lecontei*) containing two newly hatched young and one addled egg. The female was flushed from the nest and the male was observed singing from the top of a bush nearby.

The afternoon of April 1 was spent in the vicinity of the Maricopa oil fields, near the west end of the lake. Here Mrs. Howard made the first find, a nest of the Leconte Thrasher containing four eggs about half incubated. During the remainder of the afternoon five other nests of this thrasher were found, as follows. By O. W. Howard, two nests containing three and four slightly incubated eggs, respectively; by Mr. Sandberg, one nest containing three young, and by the writer, two nests, one of which contained three nearly grown young and the other two newly hatched young and one addled egg. All these nests were located in *triplex* bushes. In the same locality four nests of the Bell Sparrow were noted. Three of these contained slightly incubated eggs and the fourth newly hatched young. Camp was made for the night by the lake shore.

On the morning of April 2 the only thing of interest noted was a Roadrunner's nest lined with burlap. This nest contained seven slightly incubated eggs. Other nests noted were California Shrike with five eggs and Western Crow with four. Tree Swallows were abundant and were nest building generally in the willow timber.—G. WILLETT, *Forrester Id., Alaska.*

**Cases of Early Nesting in the State of Washington.**—In spite of the exceedingly cold, wet spring of the present year, 1917, it is rather surprising to note that several species of birds were, if anything, rather earlier than usual in nest building. Together with Mr. J. H. Bowles, of Tacoma, a trip was made on April 17, to a locality about twenty miles south of this city that is noted for its abundance of bird life.

On nearing the particular spot for which we were bound a pair of Killdeer (*Oxyechus vociferus*) came to notice that seemed to be in great distress at our approach. Close examination showed a baby chick about a week old. At a distance of about thirty yards he looked a miniature adult Killdeer, perfect in every respect even to the ring around the neck. A closer view, however, showed it had only the upper ring. Another interesting feature was its very long legs, looking greatly out of proportion to its small size, which were doubled up along the body as it crouched upon the ground.

Nearing a small lake that was hidden in a mixed growth of oak and Douglas fir we located a nest of the California Creeper (*Certhia familiaris occidentalis*) that seemed ready for eggs. This later contained seven eggs, a record in point of numbers for this vicinity, if not for its entire range.

On the other side of this lake a slightly incubated set of three eggs of the Kennicott Screech Owl (*Otus asio kennicotti*) was found in a natural cavity five feet up in a cottonwood tree. This makes the fourth set of eggs taken from this same pair of birds in the past three years. The hole from which this set was taken was found to contain three eggs two years ago, the second set for that year being found about two hundred yards distant from the first. Last year a set of three was taken from the hole last mentioned, while this year, as already stated, a set of three was taken from nest number one.

While skirting the lake and the dense willow swamp at its head, two female Mallards (*Anas platyrhynchos*) were seen, each with a brood of ducklings about a week old. When we consider that it requires a month for ducks' eggs to hatch, the first two weeks in March proves an early date for these birds to lay their eggs. As we were watching the second lot of young Mallards being taken out on dry ground for a sun-bath, a Hooded Merganser (*Lophodytes cucullatus*) was flushed from her nest. This was found to contain ten eggs, in which incubation was about two-thirds advanced.

Next, an Audubon Warbler (*Dendroica auduboni auduboni*) of the female sex was seen gathering material for her nest. When a sufficient load was obtained she flew high up into a giant fir, where we lost sight of her at a height of about one hundred and fifty feet as she was still going upward.—STANTON WARBURTON, JR., *Tacoma, Washington, May 15, 1917.*